



**Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.**

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**Testimony  
Submitted to the  
Education Committee**

**March 23, 2009**

**SB 1140 AN ACT CONCERNING NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS AND  
LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND A STUDY OF THE REGIONALIZATION OF CERTAIN  
SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATIONS**

**SB 1142 AN ACT CONCERNING RELIEF OF STATE MANDATES ON SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

**HB 5049 AN ACT CONCERNING THE TEACHER EDUCATION AND MENTORING PROGRAM**

**HB 6687 AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES**

**HB 6688 AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION GRANTS**

CABE believes that the language in Section 1 of SB 1140, which "allows" the chief elected official of municipalities to negotiate the return of any unexpended funds appropriated to a board of education, is unnecessary. In fact, since local boards of education lack the ability to carry over funds from year to year, under current law funds are automatically returned to the municipalities. CABE urges you to amend Section 2 of SB 1140 to provide that there would be representation from local and regional boards of education and the regional education service centers on the task force to study regionalization of school district governance and functions. Their expertise would be invaluable to the work of the task force.

CABE strongly supports numerous provisions of SB 1142, An Act Concerning Relief of State Mandates on School Districts. The postponement of implementation of the in-school suspension requirements until July 1, 2011 is important given the budgetary impact on many school districts.

Providing one additional month for school district to provide non tenured teachers with notice of possible non-renewal will allow boards of education to have a clearer fiscal picture and reduce the number of unwarranted non-renewal notices. Insurance of non-renewal notices has a significant negative impact on the morale and functioning of the school districts.

CABE strongly supports the provision in Section 4 which provides that special education disputes the burden of proof is on the party requesting the hearing. This would bring Connecticut law into conformance with the vast majority of other states.

CABE supports the provisions in Section 5 which provides that the obligation of a school district to provide special education services terminates on the child's twenty-first birthday, or upon graduation from high school.

CABE supports the provisions in Section 6 which will reduce the reporting requirements on school districts by providing full reports every 5 years to the Commissioner of Education on the condition of school facilities.

We urge you to include two additional mandate relief provisions in this bill related to magnet schools:

- Eliminate the requirement that sending districts which do not offer preschool pay for preschool programs at magnet schools.
- Provide magnet school enrollment information in a timely manner to school districts to allow for budget planning.

CABE has a number of concerns with respect to HB 5049, An Act Concerning the Teacher Education and Mentoring Program. CABE recognizes the need for a strong teacher induction program. However, this bill shifts the state responsibility for teacher induction as a component of certification to the local level, with no guarantee that resources will be available for successful implementation. We are also very concerned that there will be 166 different standards established for "satisfactory completion" of the modules. While CABE is a long standing advocate for local control of appropriate education matters, there needs to be uniformity in the state certification system. We urge you to create a proposal that utilizes the resources of the regional education service centers in the implementation of the teacher induction program.

CABE opposes the provision in HB 6687, An Act Concerning Minor Revisions to the Education Statutes, which increases the qualifications for school nurses. We are very concerned that the increased requirements will exacerbate the existing difficulties of finding enough nurses to staff our schools.

CABE supports the provisions of HB 6688, An Act Concerning Education Grants, which provide additional support to magnet school and open choice students. The provision in Section 2 which eliminates the reduction in the student count for magnet school students is particularly important to the financial stability of sending districts.

We appreciate your attention to these issues.